4: Mersadier MS37 Senegal MS37

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/For detailed information on the family budgets of 43 families in the city of Thiès, see category 116, pp. 6-74./

/390 cont./

114 collected seemed to us later to lack precision.

125 The method that we have used is simple. For the seven African investigators (each concerning himself with six or seven families) and for the director of the investigation, it was primarily a matter of being present as often as possible and as long as possible with each family and of noting in a notebook devised for this use all of the financial activities of the family each day during a month of 31 days (1)

1. For detailed information on the method followed for this investigation, cf. Y. Mersadier, "Un essai d'enquête sur le niveau de vie d'une population urbaine /An attempt to investigate the living standard of an urban population/" [communication at the conference of experts on the social consequences of industrialization and the urban problems in Africa, Abidjan, September 1954].

[511] (the month of March 1954). We obtained quite accurate data on the "routine" expenses of the month, principally food, fuel, illumination, and maintenance, and basic elements for the calculation of other categories of expenses, clothing, material, equipment, various familial expenses, religious expenses, etc., which we wanted to estimate for the period of a year. But here we had to rely in part on the statements of the persons investigated. Nevertheless the almost continual presence of the investigator with the families for a month permitted him, in several questionings and by rechecking, to arrive at figures which we believe are quite close to reality.

125 434 The real income was often quite difficult to estimate. In principle there should have been no difficulties in the case of salaried workers, who willingly show their pay receipt. For the

7:Crowder J-5 (1955-1958) 1959
MS37 Senegal MS37
Dakar
Wolof MS30

out of the bus and it was only with difficulty that Arnold and I managed to extricate ourselves. We took a taxi, at almost greater cost than the journey from Kaolak to Dakar, to a dingy little hotel, in the old quarter of the city. To reach it we passed through the centre of Dakar. Trees lined the streets and the architecture of both offices and houses was admirably suited to its tropical setting. It was at once evident that Dakar was a city and not just a town that had, like Lagos, rambled and sprawled and got too big. With its statuesque young skyscrapers and its wide streets, Dakar seemed a model city for the new West Africa. It was neither distinctly African nor European, but had its affinity with the modern cities of South America.

Arnold, accustomed to the higgledy-piggledy, chaotic sprawl of Lagos, and the quiet Victorian dignity of Freetown, could not quite take this in. He seemed almost to resent it as an imposition on Africa, as something that was not African. True, I found that against this background the African appeared, at first, to be an intruder. Nothing seemed more incongruous than a vast Jollof belle, dressed in her traditional robes of lace and muslin, sweeping past the more outrageous examples of *cinema moderna* architecture, or standing pensively beneath a marble plaque depicting a naked African surrounded by the fruits of progress. More incongruous still was the sight of them being spooned in and out of fast American cars or staring into patisserie windows—just imagine one of those muslin cocoons tackling a chocolate éclair. Yet the Africans seemed to have accepted their surroundings with such aplomb that very soon I was to feel that it was the Europeans who were out of place. There seemed nothing unnatural in half a dozen Africans making up their bed for the night on the pavement outside a twelve-story bank, or the young men in tight jeans standing on the street corners eyeing passing girls, just like Saturday night back at the Buildings.

We stayed one night in the Hotel des Fleurs, the cheapest I could find in Dakar. It was owned by a Lebanese, and for Dakar, a city which is almost prohibitive in price for an Englishman, it was remarkably cheap. A haircut in Dakar is 12s., and it has one of the highest cost of living indices in the world.

That night when I entered a bar called appropriately 'Café de Paris', I was unable to believe that we were still in Africa. It had

/189 cont./

351 there again the small one-room structures of wood or straw are an exception to the rule and are distributed at random over the concession.

Each owner or tenant likes very much to see his parcel clearly delimited, and the wall is the general rule. But its forms are very different, and this in one and the same parcel, ranging from the house itself or a high wall of durable material to a line of pickets running along a simple heap of rubble. In any case, the parcels that are not completely enclosed, with merely an opening on the street, are rare.

343 351 What else does one find within the parcel or in the structures serving as dwellings? Two things: a little hovel sheltering the Madagascan stove and serving as kitchen, and then, in a corner of the parcel, an enclosure surrounded by [783] secco, with a kettle containing the water needed for ablutions, which gives off a characteristic ammoniacal odor, yet not enough to inconvenience the inhabitants.

362 ●511 342 Let us complete this description with the table of the number of buildings, shown according to the number of rooms and the material used. /Table 24 appears here./

More than 50% of the wooden structures (113 out of 206) have only one or two rooms, that is, fall into the first category. Thus the whole habitat does not show a very high standard of living.

511 364 354 312 /190/ This is still more true if one now considers the equipment of the huts. 228 homes out of 258, nearly 90 %, have neither water, electricity, nor w.c. in the concession; 26 have electricity only; one has a w.c. without running water or electricity, one likewise has a w.c. plus electricity (in these two cases the w.c. consists of a septic pit dug into the sand in one corner of the parcel by the person concerned under the control of the Service d'hygiene). One has water and electricity. Ten per cent of the homes are thus lighted with electricity, and the remainder with kerosene, which is very few in a city where, except in the very last quarters, it is possible to have a meter installed in each parcel.

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Table 24

Material \ Number of Rooms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+	Total
Wood	46	67	27	25	27	4	10	206
Durable material	9	15	16	2	2	1	0	45
Crinting	3	3	1	0	2	3	0	12
Straw (1)	7	7	1	1	2	0	0	18
Total	65	91	45	29	33	8	10	281

1. Each hut of straw contains only one room. When we divide them up under the rubrics of 2, 3, or 5 rooms, this means that there are 2, 3, or 5 straw huts on the same parcel.

/190 cont./

511 207 Nevertheless, ingenuity and mutual helpfulness make up for the poverty of the equipment, and if one comes across well over 10% of owners of radio sets, it is because in a number of cases the owner attaches his radio to the current which comes into the house of his immediate -- or distant -- neighbor.

364 514 A very serious inconvenience, as much from the point of view of hygiene as from the point of view of comfort, results from the total absence of sanitary equipment. Without doubt, an enclosure on the parcel has its particular spot, but this little corner cannot serve everyone, and for those who are on the edge of the agglomeration it is the bush which serves as a comfort station; for the others whose parcel is located far from the outskirts it is the vacant land within Pikine. This state of affairs is unfortunate for many reasons: first of all, for a good many inhabitants it is a veritable expedition, in a word, to go to the toilet; one can imagine what this means for the old people or for the sick. Besides, it is unhealthy, and to get an idea of this it will suffice to go out one winter evening after a tornado and breathe this nauseous odor which the wind blows from the vacant land over the rest of the agglomeration (1).

[515] [653]

1. At the beginning of 1961 the public authorities undertook the construction of several groups of "showers" in 12 places. One can only wish for the extension of the anticipated program and its rapid completion.

511 364 354 312 In the districts, while all are not the owners of a septic tank, the situation is better. Only 12% of the homes are counted as not having either water, electricity, or w.c., 12% have electricity in addition to w.c. without a water line in the concession, 21% have water and electricity, and the remainder, some 34%, have complete modern equipment.

[331] It should also be noted that the Office de l'Habitat no longer builds structures without a septic tank in its subdivisions.

/190 cont./

builds structures without a septic tank in its subdivisions. The difference between the two groups of habitat is therefore very noticeable: only the districts /191/ constitute a modern type of housing adapted to the exigencies of the city, while the vast majority of the inhabitants of the other quarters are deprived of the comfort which the modern city affords.

Can one say as well that they live in "shantytowns"? Certainly not. What characterizes the "shantytowns" is the crowding of the population in a limited space and the disorder of the huts. This is by no means the case here: the streets, although of sand, are well defined, and, above all, the parcels are large; there is actual space with its psychological reverberation which permits the inhabitants of a parcel to feel that they are by themselves. To the further question asked, "what is it that you like about your housing in Pikine?" the replies have brought out the existence of this feeling of "home" /quoted in English/, of "one's own home," which in most cases was associated with the space occupied and the tranquility that it provided.

This material and psychological reality of free space is all the more important since one realizes, if one relates the number of rooms utilized to the number of persons, that the relative scantiness of space brings with it an undeniable crowding in many instances. Here (p. 55) is the table, in absolute figures, of the homes, which have been listed simultaneously according to the number of persons and according to the number of rooms. The horizontal line gives the number of persons, and the vertical line that of rooms. For example, in the case located at the intersection of horizontal line No. 2 and the vertical indicated by the figure 6 and 7, the number 12 means that there are 12 households in which the number of persons is six or seven and that they occupy only two rooms. The first table gives the distribution in the quarters, the second that of the districts.

The broken line in the middle of the table separates it into two parts; inasmuch as in general one room has an area of about ten square meters, we have considered that the

/191 cont./

511 362 limit of reasonable occupancy has been passed when one figures an average of more than two persons per room. Thus at the left of this line are the households which do not exceed this relation of one room for two persons, at the right those for whom occupancy becomes crowded. Now let us add all the figures at the right of the line of separation, and let us refer this total of "crowded" homes in each table to the general total. One finds that this result, which one may call the "index of occupancy," is much higher in the districts than in the quarters: 26.4% as against 45.2%. This phenomenon indicates that the families are much more /192/ /Table 25 appears here/ numerous in the districts. It is possible to verify this in two ways: first, by comparing the average number of persons per household, which gives 7.43 as against 4.86; or else by constructing from the preceding tables the histogram of the various families in percentages. One then finds that in the first case the median runs between seven and eight persons, and in the second between four and five; in other words, that 47% of the homes in the districts have at least eight persons, while in the quarters one counts only 47% of the homes with five or more persons.

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511 352 The same tendency is shown in the matter of the relation of the furnishings to the number of persons. We have therefore drawn up a table identical to the preceding one and substituted the number of beds for the number of rooms, for it is the bed that constitutes the principal article of furniture. Obviously the data obtained do not have the same value, since it has not been possible /193/ /Table 26 appears here/ to distinguish the various kinds of beds: beds in one or two places, wooden or metal springs. Nevertheless, it is shown that the ratio of the number of persons to the number of beds is higher in the districts than in the quarters. The total result is the following: in the former 47, in the latter 38 beds per 100 persons. One finds only five or six instances where the bed is nothing but a simple mat thrown on the beaten earth in the huts of the quarters.

10: Thoré--55 S-5 (1960) 1962 MS37 Senegal MS37

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Table 25. Number of rooms per person. 1) Quarters.

	1	2	3	4	5	6-7	8-9	10 to 15	15 +	TOTAL
1	15	10	11	10	8	4	1	0	0	59
2	4	13	10	15	8	12	3	3	0	68
3	0	5	7	12	4	8	5	1	0	42
4	2	4	1	5	1	7	5	1	0	26
5	0	2	2	4	4	12	9	6	0	39
6	0	1	0	0	0	4	3	3	0	11
7 +	0	1	0	0	1	2	4	3	1	12
Total	21	36	31	46	26	49	30	17	1	257

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What can be concluded from these various remarks? That in general the inadequacy of housing conditions explains why the people of Pikine attach so much importance to the land of their parcel, and why this space, as much if not more than the interior, is the center of family life and activity. The rooms of the dwelling serve mainly as a shelter for sleeping and to screen a conversation or a tête-à-tête from indiscreet eyes and ears. During the day one is better off outside than inside, and this is the reason why the veranda is so important. It is the link /194/ between outdoors and indoors; when one is sitting there, one is outside in the air and yet sheltered from the rain, the sun, and the stifling heat inside.

In the second place, it is undeniable that augmentation of the comfort of the habitat is accompanied by an enlargement

Table 26. -- 2) Districts

	1	2	3	4	5	6-7	8-9	10 to 15	15 +	TOTAL
1										
2			2	1	2	2	1			8
3		1	3		4	4	3	5		20
4	1					1	2	4	1	9
5				1			2		1	4
6						1				1
7										
Total..... ..	1	1	5	2	6	8	8	9	2	42

/194 cont./

of the family. This is an extremely important phenomenon. In order to understand it better, a study of the group occupying the parcel is now in order.

A first distinction arises regarding the mode of occupation. Aside from the tenants and owners of their parcels, there are also those who are neither the one nor the other and who live gratuitously in a hut that does not belong to them, generally because of their kinship ties with the owner. Here is the table in percentages of these three categories arranged by ethnic groups. /Table 27 appears here./

62% of the occupants are thus owners, but we have seen that only 45% have been expelled from Dakar and have therefore from this fact become owners of the parcel that has been granted

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10: Thoré--57 S-5 (1960) 1962 MS37 Senegal MS37

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Table 27

Ethnic Groups	W	S	T	P	M	B	O	Av.
Owner	67	58	60	53	50	63	68	62
Renter	19	23	32	30	42	27	18	23
Occupant without paying	14	19	8	17	8	10	14	15
Total	100							100

/194 cont./

511 them. As a result, a certain number of family heads, around
427 17%, are owners only because they have bought their parcel.
[369] This fact therefore shows that Pikine has become a choice locality where it is worth the trouble to spend money in order to establish oneself, and thus corroborates the hypothesis set forth above, that the evolution of Pikine today attests to an indisputable degree of urban maturity.

In the districts one counts only 9% who are tenants; all the others are owners or on the way to it. But while the rent of a room in a hut located in the quarters costs an average of 500 francs, the price is much higher in the districts, and this income permits the owner, who for his part is obliged to make a monthly payment to the Office de l'Habitat hardly higher /195/ than the amount of the rent, to acquire at the end of five years a dwelling by paying, in a word, only a ridiculous amount. It is difficult to evaluate the frequency of this abusive practice; in our sample it was three out of four tenants.

351 Another point has to do with the possibility of dividing
511 the parcel into half parcels or of two and even three homes being associated on the land of a single parcel. This possibility does not exist in the districts, where, in practice, economic obligations and the arrangement of the habitat as a rule require having only a single home per parcel. In the quarter, out of 264 homes, one counts 191 of them, namely, 72%, that are alone on the land; 46, or 17%, are in groups of two; and 27, or 11%, are in groups of three.

511 The types of association are very diverse, from the
592 households which are united by a bond of kinship and which represent 22% of the cases of association, that is to say, 6% of the total, to homes living on two half-parcels rigorously separated. The most frequent case is that of two unrelated households living together, who share, if not the same hut, at least the same inner court, each having its fire and doing its cooking separately. In general, the families thus grouped contain only a limited number of members, the scantiness of a half parcel not being favorable to the installation of numerous families. Since this factor does not

/195 cont./

511 592 exist in the districts, where the parcel is individual, one can see in it one of the reasons why the average number of individuals per home is higher there than elsewhere.

592 162 The analysis of the qualitative composition of the family group discloses another reason. Schematically one may distinguish four principal kinds of family, if one considers its qualitative composition: the lone adult; the adult living with one or more children, where it is a matter of his own or of young brothers; the family called "elementary," composed of the husband, his wife or wives, and their children; finally, the elementary family to which are added either the collateral relatives, or outsiders, or both.

Here (p. 60) is the table of the percentages of these different types listed by ethnic groups; the first is that of the quarters, the second that of the districts.

When one goes from the quarters to the districts, the total shows that:

1st. The number of elementary families increases.

2nd. The proportion of the "extended" families -- in the very broad sense of the term -- remains the same in the two cases.

/196/ 3rd. This increase in the rate of the conjugal family is thus due to the almost total disappearance in the districts of single persons living alone or in the company of children who are in their charge, especially divorced women. /Table 28 appears here./

592 162 595 One may ask whether this factor suffices in itself to explain this increase in the number of individuals per household which we have listed above. There is another difference between the districts and the quarters which may likewise contribute to this explanation: it is the rate of polygamy. We mean by that the number of household heads who are polygamists in relation to the total number of male heads of households. Out of 100 family heads 21 are polygamists in the quarters and 31 in the districts. The difference is notable.

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511 595 The raising of the standard of living, which is symbolized and realized by the acquisition of a durable dwelling provided with modern conveniences, thus seems to go hand in hand with an increase in polygamy. Another factor should also be correlated with it: the educational level. The proportion of polygamists among the literate is higher than the corresponding proportion among the illiterate: 26.5% as against 21.6%.

511 But, as the preceding figures suggest, it seems that the principal cause is to be found in the improvement of economic conditions, and education in this case plays only the role of a /197/ second cause, which is the very thing that permits access to a higher income. Another index runs along the same lines: the average number of persons under [602] the care of the head of the family, persons who do not live in the concession, but either in the city or village. This average figure is distinctly larger for the districts: 219 as against 142 persons under the care of 100 heads of families, in addition to those who live with him.

It is now possible to draw some conclusions which are to be found at the point of convergence with the preceding remarks.

511 592 602 1) It does not seem that what is designated by the deplorable name of "familial parasitism" (1) can be held

> 1. It is not a question of denying the negative and paralyzing influence which a family can exert on the best of its members and which is ordinarily designated by the name of parasitism. But neither should one ignore the positive aspect of solidarity that makes up for the detrimental consequences of migration and eases for the immigrant the transition from the traditional environment to the urban environment.

responsible for the relative increase of the number of persons

/197 cont./

511 592 602 per home in the districts. This fact may be explained by two other reasons: on the one hand, the disappearance of homes reduced to single or divorced persons, in favor of the conjugal family; on the other hand, as part of this, an increase in the number of spouses.

2) Family solidarity is no less a patent fact in the districts than in the quarters. It works in two ways: the first consists of taking complete charge of the housing and support of brothers, nephews, or other relatives. This is shown in the figure of 38% of the families who extend beyond the framework of the conjugal family properly speaking. In this respect the inhabitants of the districts behave much the same as the others. But they make a greater effort with respect to the second form of family solidarity: sending money to relatives to all or part of their living expenses.

369 3) The betterment of living conditions and the participation to a certain degree in the material comfort that the urban environment brings with it do not necessarily mean a rupture and an overthrow of traditional social behavior. On the contrary, on two points, polygamy and family solidarity, there is a reinforcement of these behaviors, and, if one may apply this terminology to Senegal, it is not "detribalization" which should be spoken of, but "supertribalization."

/198/ Conclusion

Despite its youth, Dagoudane-Pikine is a definite city no less than Dakar, although closely dependent upon the latter. It is a city by reason of its area, the size of its population, the effort undertaken with regard to equipment, especially with regard to schools, and finally by the type of work offered to an important part of the economically active population. It is also a typical African city, with its small number of durable buildings, the considerable unemployment, the large number of young people, and above all, its gross [444] deficiencies of public equipment. We have not spoken of its [443] health equipment; it is still terribly inadequate, although

[12 cont.]

369 198 562 [511] that [13] prevailed there. This has been made obvious by the war; the modern households have suffered from economic difficulties much less than the others, because the women proved to be much more skillful in getting out of difficulties with the little that could be obtained.

369 581 [556] Will the custom of such sumptuous expenses with regard to marriage last? It is difficult to tell. It evidently greatly satisfies the pride of the man of Saint-Louis by exhibiting his wealth and his generosity. If it makes marriage difficult for young people, this is very regrettable, because the precious years of youth are lost and the children will come too late; it makes marriage the great affair of one's life, which is good, [562] and it has contributed in a very large measure to the freeing of the girls, which, except for some extravagances, is a great benefit.

Diagne Oumar Syr

Instructor at N'Dioum
(Circle of Podor)

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369 441 563 443 local products (groundnuts, millet ...) are bought or bartered for.

still almost empty quarter of the residence.

369 433 458 Already the economic equilibrium of the city was no longer essentially based on the commerce of trade, subject to price fluctuations, but also on the budding industry which assured it a certain stability. It is true that the latter, barely acquired, was put to a harsh test during the world crisis from 1930 to 1934. In the course of this difficult period the price of the groundnut slumped. The old commercial firms which depended solely on the trading were no longer able to meet their payments and liquidate their stock: Société Française du Sénégal, the firms Lacombe, Latrille... The sounder establishments were themselves obliged to close their city branches temporarily, for example, Peyrissac, Maurel Frères. Nevertheless one did not see here a complete slump in commerce with spectacular failures such as occurred in Dakar, but rather commercial liquidations, sales of stocks that were repurchased by Levantines and wholesale companies.

[471] [563] The effects of the crisis, which ended in 1934, resulted in a redistribution of commercial ownership, a readaptation of commerce to the new requirements, along with the definitive establishment of the Levantines.

369 498 433 At this date the fusion of the two railroad companies, the Dakar--Saint-Louis and Thiès-Niger, stimulated an expansion of the industrial quarter by regrouping at Thiès the workshops originally installed at Dakar for the Dakar--Saint-Louis railway.

369 [162] [511] [361] On the eve of the Second World War the city reached the figure of 22,000 inhabitants, 1,200 of them Europeans. The almost complete disappearance of epidemics, the better food supply, the construction of comfortable houses (Ballabey district created as early as 1925 for the railway workers, villas for officers) permit metropolitan families to settle in a permanent fashion. In a parallel manner, the native

/384 cont./

369 563 166 162 464 in the city at the home of a relative, at the home of a friend or the friend or relative of a friend, or at the home of a resident originally from the same village or merely from the same region -- all of this ultimately makes up the factors that are more decisive than the salary. Because of this, while among the resident non-Africans the number of persons employed amounts to 43 % of the total and 64% of the economically active, among the resident Africans, the proportion of workers is no more than 27% of the total and 42% /385/ of the economically active. If one adds to that the salaries, on the average much higher among the first than among the second, one finds in Dakar some of the contrasts characteristic of West African cities: on the one hand, among the non-Africans, a high standard of living which is often shown in the appearance of their quarters, and, on the other hand, the mass of the African population whose settling in the city is tied neither to a correlative augmentation of the normal opportunities for lodgings nor to a higher living standard in relation to the bush, which gives to the African city, or at least to some of its quarters, an appearance more wretched than that of the villages of the interior.

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369 563 [361] This situation, formerly very clear, put Dakar in the normal category of West African cities, where a white city and a black city stand in contrast (22), a contrast that was the result

[113] 22. Dresh, J., "Villes d'Afrique occidentale /Cities of West Africa/," Cahiers d'Outre-Mer, 1950.

of a de facto segregation imposed, not by law, but by the norms of urbanism and of hygiene, to which it was impossible for the bulk of the natives to subject themselves, and also by the high price of rent -- the non-Africans being nearly always lodged by their employers. In 1936 Charles Morazé wrote: "Formerly Europeans and natives lived mixed. Innumerable families lived

[465]